**Inauguration of Centre for Environmental Laws**

1067. SHRI RAMDAS AGARAWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether govt.'s attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Hindustan Times of July 16, 1993, regarding inauguration of centre for Environmental Laws;

(b) if so, what are the objectives/aims/functions assigned to the Centre and likely assistance to be given by the government and the Ford Foundation during the current financial year;

(c) whether Government have finalised the draft legislation which may play an important role in enabling, implementing and monitoring the environmental situation and also set up Environment Tribunals for expeditious assessment of damage caused by accidents arising out of hazardous substances etc; and

(d) if so, whether the Bill would be brought before Parliament during the Monsoon Session?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The Minister for Environment & Forests inaugurated the Centre for Environmental Laws on 15th July, 1993.

The objectives of the Centre are to develop a central repository of legal information, monitoring, implementation of Environmental Laws and organise policy research for formulation or amendment to Environmental Laws at National, Regional and International levels. The Centre intends to serve the needs of India, South Asia and developing countries in general. The Centre will have six units—education, networking, litigation, publication and media, information and liberery units.

Financial assistance to the Centre has been sought from the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Ford Foundation. The Ministry has given the Centre a sum of Rupees Twenty eight thousand, for preparation of a report on the Legal Action Plan for ratification of the 1992 Bio-diversity convention.

(c) and (d) A bill to provide for strict liability for damages arising out of any accident occurring while handling any hazardous substance and for the establishment of a National Environment Tribunal for effective and expeditious disposal of cases arising from such accident with a view to giving relief and compensation for damages to persons, property and the environment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto has been introduced in Parliament on 18th August, 1992 and is due for consideration and passing.

**Montreal Protocol**

1068. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of EVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is preparing a programme to outline a time-bound strategy to phase out Ozone depleting substances as per the programmes of the Montreal Protocol; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and

(b) India is a signatory to the Montreal Protocol which makes it mandatory for the country to phase out Ozone depleting substances by the year 2010. The incremental costs of the phase out are to be met from the Multilateral Fund and for this purpose, it is essential for the country to prepare a Country Programme providing necessary data as well as the country's strategy for the phase out. This Ministry is in the process of preparing the Country Programme.

**Expansion of Farm Forestry in Big Way**

1069. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to expand Farm Forestry in a big way; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount earmarked therefor during the Eighth Plan; State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS-(SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Integrated Forestry Project in Gujarat**

1070. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Gujarat has submitted a proposal in respect of integrated forestry project Phase-III;

(b) what are the reasons for delay in clearing the Integrated Forestry Project Phase-III; and

(c) whether any efforts have been made to get the project cleared by the World Bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) The Government of Gujarat had earlier sent a project proposal titled "Integrated Forestry Development Project", Phase III. Under the project, it is proposed to cover 230795 ha. area of land and distribute about 250 million seedlings to local people for planting on their land. The main objectives of the project are to restore the environmental balance, promote tree-planting, improve the fertility and the productivity of the forest areas, adoption of intensive soil conservation and water harvesting measures, use of alternate and non-conventional energy devices etc.

The project proposal was posed to the World Bank. The matter has been pursued with them and they have indicated that the State Government's project proposal has been included in the pipeline of projects that will be considered for provision of financial assistance.

**Environmental Audit Reports**

1071. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is compulsory for all industrial units in the country to submit environmental audit reports; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Every person carrying on an industry, operation or process requiring consent under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 or the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 or both or authorisation under the Hazardous (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 shall submit an environmental audit statement for the financial year ending the 31st March in the prescribed format to the concerned State Pollution Control Board on or before the 30th day of September every year, starting from 1993.

**Reviewing Indian Forest Sector**

1072. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank have prepared a paper titled 'Indian Forest Sector Review';

(b) if so, the details of the issues contained in the paper;

(c) the recommendations made thereon to tackle those issues; and

(d) the follow up action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The World Bank Forest Sector Review is intended to analyse the efforts made in the past, including through projects assisted by the World Bank, to develop the forest resources in India and to analyse the factors that can contribute to better management of the country's forest resources in the future. The Review brings out that for better management of the forests of the country, the main issues that require to be addressed include: (i) improving incentives for local participation and private efforts; (ii) improving the technological means to enhance productivity; (iii) increasing the effectiveness of the Forests Departments in the States; (iv) prioritising the areas that need to be protected and developed; and (v) identifying the issues requiring further analysis and resolution.

(d) The Review is intended to provide an overview of the key issues in forest management in India and also assist the World Bank in considering new forestry projects for provision of financial assistance. The Government organised two consultations in Bangalore and Delhi in the last week of April, 1993, for discussing the Review with the forest officials, non-official experts, voluntary agencies, etc.

**Agreement between India and China on Technology Exchange**

1073. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: